

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I'm writing to urge you to support the proposed merger between EchoStar Communications and Hughes Electronics. I believe the merger holds tremendous potential for my company in Staten Island, NY which sells EchoStar's DISH Network satellite TV service. The new company will offer a more attractive product to consumers, and this will mean more business for my company.

I can offer local broadcast channels to all of my customers when they subscribe to the DISH Network. This is not the case for retailers in medium and small-sized markets. Currently, EchoStar offers local broadcast service in only 36 television markets. The merger will allow the new company to end the duplication of programming and free up hundreds of channels allowing consumers in all 210 television markets across the country to receive their local broadcast channels. As a DISH Network retailer, I am very excited by this development because satellite TV will be perceived nationally as a real alternative to cable.

Today's fledgling satellite Internet services are too expensive for everyday customers, leaving cable and DSL providers in control of the broadband market. The new company will have the spectrum and satellite resources necessary to provide consumers across the country with a competitive high-speed Internet alternative, and my customers will have more choice in broadband providers.

My customers chose satellite TV over cable because of its superior customer service, better quality picture and sound, and the abundance of channel options. However, cable companies now offer digital cable in millions of homes. This has negated the past advantages of satellite over cable TV and has begun to hurt EchoStar and DIRECTV's ability to compete. The new company will have the resources, spectrum and satellites necessary to offer a competitive satellite TV product, improving customer service and keeping cable prices in check.

The new company has also pledged to offer new and enhanced services like interactive television and near video-on-demand. These products will allow satellite TV to go head-to-head in competition with cable companies and other competitors as they improve their technological capabilities.

EchoStar will not be able to compete effectively with the cable companies in the future unless it has the ability to match their technological innovations. The merger will allow the new EchoStar to provide HDTV, Interactive TV, and near video-on-demand. The other benefits outlined above are important, but these are the most important ones for me. Please support the EchoStar-Hughes merger, and help bring these advanced television services to consumers sooner rather than later.

Sincerely,

gregg lieber
104 mcclean avenue
staten island, NY 10305